

**The New Castle City's Planning Commission Meeting took place on April 23, 2007 at 6:30 p.m. in the City of New Castle's Town Hall.**

Members Present: Dr. Jack Norsworthy, Chairman  
Jim Steele, Co-Chairman  
Elliott Tatum  
Thomas Wilson  
Joe DiAngelo  
Bill Simpson  
George Freebery

Member Absent: David Bird

Staff Present: Douglas Lloyd, City Planner

City Staff Present: Mayor John Klingmeyer, City Administrator Cathie Thomas, Building Official Jeff Bergstrom

Mr. Steele called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. Roll call was taken. He introduced Mr. John Gaworski who is a new member on City Council.

Approval of Minutes – Mr. Wilson noted a change on page 3 under General Discussion as follows: strike “Mr. Wilson distributed a copy of the city code to each member of the Planning Commission...” and insert “Mr. Wilson requested a copy of the city code be given to each member...” **Mr. DiAngelo made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 19, 2007 meeting as amended; Mr. Simpson seconded the motion which was passed by unanimous vote.**

Minor Subdivision 21-022.00-002 into Two Lots on Cherry Lane – Mr. Mark Ziegler of McBride and Ziegler explained their proposal in the Riveredge Industrial Park. They received approval from this commission at last month's Planning Commission meeting for an office building and this plan carves out a four-acre parcel for that office building. Each commission member received a copy of the plan sketch in a timely manner that shows the property line. (Brief discussion ensued.) **Mr. DiAngelo made a motion to recommend approval of this proposal to City Council. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with each Commission member stating the reason for their vote. The vote was unanimous.**

Comprehensive Plan Updates & Review -- Dr. Norsworthy informed the purpose of tonight's discussion is to give the Planning Commission an idea of what direction they want to go in. Some discussion followed about when the plan is due. The commitment to the update of our plan is what is considered. Ms. Cathie Thomas will look into the timetable involved for submission. Mr. Ed O'Donnell of the University of Delaware (UD) referred to the city's Action Plan and asked where he is to begin. He complimented the current plan and suggested improvements should include enhancing the mapping. Mr. Simpson asked what UD's scope of services are. Services would include analyzing of incomplete items in the current plan, mapping, facilities, goals and strategies. The latter may be

something the Commission wants to condense. There are certain certification requirements for towns over 2,000 to get the plan certified. All of these have to be looked at. *(The process to be used was described to Commission members.)* Costs can't be discussed until it is decided what will be in the plan. Mayor Klingmeyer expressed his desire to look at all of our neighborhoods and include them in the process. He also suggested looking for funding in other areas such as WILMAPCO, Municipal Services, Trustees, and the Department of Transportation. *(Extensive discussion took place concerning funding and neighborhood involvement.)* Support from city council is necessary.

Mr. O'Donnell informed they could prepare a city-wide plan giving sensitivity to neighborhoods. Mr. Lloyd suggested that we currently have a good plan and that the Planning Commission should start with goals and objectives and tackle those that were accomplished, assign priorities to those that remain, and identify those that are seen as weaknesses in the last plan. Incorporate the neighborhood plan in the Comprehensive Plan at a later date. That portion will be labor-intensive, timely and add to costs. The Mayor asked that no vote be taken until he can bring in an outside planner to discuss this plan further. *(The Mayor will invite a professional planner to our 5/21/07 meeting.)* Mr. Lloyd suggested setting aside a portion of time at each Planning Commission meeting to discuss the status of the Action Plan. *(Discussion about the contract ensued.)* It was decided to start with the existing Action Plan and implement our ideas. **Mr. Simpson made a motion that we develop a scope of work for the UD team, update the plan to include the concept of adding in neighborhood plans but not do those plans and implement any goals we see that need to be changed that would be based on community meetings. We conduct the meetings with a facilitator provided by them, and get a price from UD. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion.** The purpose of this motion is to receive a cost quote only.

**Mr. Simpson amended his motion to include as part of the scope an implementation strategy that UD can assist us with. The motion was seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Messrs. DiAngelo, Simpson, Steele, Freebery, Wilson and Dr. Norsworthy presented affirmative votes. Mr. Tatum cast a dissenting vote. The motion passed by a vote of 6-1.**

Trustees Zoning Request for Getty Station & Ferry Cut-Off Property – Mr. Jeff Bergstrom explained why this zoning request is being made by the Trustees. The Getty station currently is a non-conforming use that is zoned retail commercial. They are looking to rezone general commercial which is the most lenient as far as what is permitted in that zoning. The gas station can continue to exist as is under non-conforming. *(Definitions of different zoning codes followed.)* Mr. Simpson expressed concern that we would be allowing other uses under new zoning. No representative from the Trustees is present at this meeting. **Mr. DiAngelo made a motion to recommend to city council that the Getty station remain non-conforming use as is. Mr. Simpson seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with members providing the reason for their vote.**

**Messrs. DiAngelo, Simpson, Freebury, Steele, Wilson and Dr. Norsworthy cast affirmative votes. Mr. Tatum cast a dissenting vote. The motion was passed by a 6-1 vote.**

Currently the ferry cut-off property is retail commercial. Mr. Wilson stated that we agreed to set-back lines in our comprehensive plan that contains a primary road. If zoning is changed for that property loopholes are created. This is why zoning retail commercial and service commercial were specified. He feels if we consider changing the zoning we could inadvertently change the plan. *(Additional discussion followed.)* **Mr. DiAngelo made a motion to recommend to city council that the ferry cut-off property be left retail commercial as is. Mr. Steele seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with members providing the reason for their vote. The vote carried by unanimous vote.**

Council's Request to Review Ordinance #451 – Planning Commission members have not yet received copies of this ordinance. **Mr. Wilson made a motion to table this item until we receive the information and review same. Mr. Simpson seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.**

Budget Review -- Dr. Norsworthy reported that he has spoken with Cathie Thomas and there is no update to our budget. He has asked for a list of expenses, income, etc. for each Planning Commission meeting and will follow up with her.

Planning Checklist Review – Mr. Lloyd reported that he, Jeff Bergstrom and Dr. Norsworthy recently discussed the development of a checklist. We are attempting to expand the application form to make it more universal to all kinds of applications that come into town and to develop a checklist that would deal with all steps of the process that would also enable the town to accurately track the process. These are two separate items. An applicant would receive a universal application and the second document would be used internally. The purpose of the form is to be a set of guidelines as to what the requirements are. Mr. Lloyd distributed a copy of the incomplete document to all Commission members for review. This item will be on the agenda for our next meeting to allow for additional discussion. Dr. Norsworthy said he is putting together an explanation of each item on the checklist. It is not a finished document yet but when completed, if someone applies for a subdivision they will receive a detailed description of what they need to proceed.

General Discussion – All Planning Commission members received information from the American Planning Association. They were asked to complete the application as soon as possible and take it to the city office or bring to our next meeting. However, the Chair would like to get the applications submitted as soon as possible.

Adjournment – **Mr. Wilson made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Steele seconded the motion which was approved unanimously.** The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Turner  
Stenographer